St. Barnabas
Lexington

the Mid-city
A Challenge

A REPORT

SEPTEMBER 1959

St. Barnabas is located in one of the older, middle class, residential areas of Philadelphia. In the last decade the population has decreased slightly, because a house here or there has gotten too old for further use. There are 56,415 people living in this area per square mile. But to make this even more startling, it must be considered that as much as 40% of the land in this square mile is now used for railway, commercial and industrial sites. The average density for the city is 16,286 and for the state 223 persons per square mile. If this 19th Ward, where St. Barnabas is situated was completely residential, there would be an average of 100,000 per square mile in this area.

At the present time 80% of the active adult members and 90% of the children walk to St. Barnabas for services. Within four or five city blocks or less than twelve minutes walking time there lives about 15,000 people. An ususually high percentage of the people in this area do not have automobiles, 50% of the children come from a home where an auto is not owned. 95% of the homes do not have any bare soil or lawn and the average concrete back yard is no larger than a small room. These back areas generally do not have any outlet and there are no alleys, just high fenses.

This 19th Ward with a population of 38,870 and an area of .689 of a square mile could be compared with a small city in a rural-like section of the country. This rural city would have living within it many doctors, lawyers. judges, teachers, bankers, business men, clergy and others. But sad to say in the homes around St barnabas, people following these professions are noticably absent. Very few if any of the teachers and other professional people who work in this area, live within it.

The local Voters Registration Board estimates that 50% of the population or nearly 20,000 persons in this area are under 21 years of age. The median for Philadelphia is 27.5% persons under 21 years old, thus giving this area almost double the city median. It is doubtful if as many as 10% or 2,000 of the present resident children would ever settle and raise families in this area. For this reason, we must classify this as a cradle area, a place where children are raised but go elsewhere to make a livelyhood and to settle. This procedure has been going in Kensington for almost the last fifty years. St. Barnabas has been haelping to raise and to teach children in this-- cradle area, for generation after generation, and then they have gone out to attend Church and to raise families in the development of Philadelphia and elsewhere in our great country.

No matter how large a city grows, the smaller communities and residential areas, within it never seem to lose their loyalty and identity. There is still a strong sense of neighborhood and an active interest in what is going on in it. Everybody living near St. Barnabas knows that it is here and functioning. Every time there is talk of closing St. Barnabas the local public concern is aroused. There are other local interests, the Kesington Volunteer Ambulance Service, a playround and St. Christophers Clinic. But this list is already too short because in that rural city we suggested, there would be many service clubs, churches, Scout troops, play grounds, and many musical and dramatic activities.

Much is offered in Philadelhia in the way of cultural advantages but to many of the people of this area, these opportunities might just as well be offered in Hong-Kong. The

people here do not seem to be as mobile as in other section of the city. They seem to feel lost and strange away from their familiar surroundings. They will go out to and enjoy cultural things and visit new places if someone will take them or will go with them.

St. Barnabas secured tickets for the Robin Hood Dell Childrens Concerts, on the first week twelve attended, the second week eighteen and the last week twenty-four went. Several of the children asked to go back each time, none of them had ever attended the Dell's Childrens afternoons before. Six of the women of St. Barnabas after visiting and observing a Vacation bible school, then taught and carried out a very successful Vacation Bible School of their own. It was the usual two week type, seven teenagers assisted and the average was fifty-four. Sunday services were held throughout the summer at St. Barnabas with an average attendance was forty-nine persons per Sunday.

WHAT DO THE PEOPLE OF ST. BARNABAS HOPE FOR?

1. To keep the Church and to have regular services.
2. To offer religious education and training to everyone.
3. To make available Cutural, Social and Educational opportunies for young and old.
4. It is our hope that in all activities the Church will bear a true witness and encourage others to join the Fellowship.

We would like to do a missionary and social in this area where it is most needed. We want to help and to serve those who cannot afford or do not wish to live elsewhere. In this CRADLE AREA the people of St. Barnabas are will to have what could be called A Childrens' Church, thus fulfilling one of the vital needs in our neighborhood.

WHAT THE PEOPLE OF ST. BARNABAS ARE NOW DOING

1. We are making as many minor improvements and keeping the building as clean as possible.
2. In this building to large for our present congregation, every effort is being made toward efficient plant operation and to balance our maintenance budget.

The nature of our problems and being located in this changing and depressed area makes our work definitely missionary. This does not make a profitable financial situation as church operations go, but we are willing to do a work in an area where the church, the WHOLE CHURCH, must carry on. This makes it necessary for us to ask assistance from the Diocese and our Sister Churches in order to carry on this vital work. We feel that if St. Barnabas is abandoned, a very important field of activity and an essential work of the church will be lost and THE CHURCH, per se, will suffer. Naturally you on the outside will want to know how much is will cost to carry on with a full program at St. Barnabas.

FIRST OF ALL LET US SAY,
that we want to do a three-fold job- -

A. Minister to a congregation with church services, Guilds, work and study groups, and etc.
B. Offering a social, cultural, and religious program to our surrounding community.
C. To modernize St. Barnabas and to provide more suitable housing for a vicar.

The congregation at present can support about 1/3 the cost of a full program. We can maintain the church and sunday school program which uses about 1/2 of the floor space, or in money about $3,500. St. Barnabas has an insured value

of $187,608.00 and a vicarage with a tax value of $3,000. A Vicar and this size plant cannot be kept~ and an effective work carried on for less than $10,000 to $12,000. It is true that for a number of years St. Barnabas has existed on a budget of from $7,000 to $9,000 and the present budget would total about $8,000. It is not necessary to point out that this minimun financial program has not been too progressive. St. Barnabas has needed outside aid for about thirty years and during this time of minimun expenditures the property has deterioated and the congregation changed. This does not discourage the people of St. Barnabas and we hope that the Church will not neglect, nor be more critical of the cost in this MISSION AND CRADLE AREA, than they would be of mission work overseas. The only profit we may be able to show would be that of children in Sunday School or our Christian Witness and service to this community. We need your help to meet the challenge facing the Modern Church in its Mid-city Work.

Note: Sept.18, 1959, the Welsh Public School next door to St Barnabas reports the largest initial enrollment in the history of the school and more are pouring in every day.

The members and workers of St. B are aware and approve of this report.

THANKS TO

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erest and assistance has made this report possible.

years can not pass without reminding the Church
the long service ard devotion its senior members,
ecially, Mr & Mrs Frederidk Ehrlen, Mr Charles
bach,senior warden, and Mr Wilbur Peters, vest-
an.

recognition were given for each worker, the re-
t would be a very long list with many commenda-
ns for the various types of contributions.
ice must also be taken of our children and those
shepherd them,-- May God Bless our church family.

respectfully submitted

Glen J Marl

captain glen j marl - episcopal
church army in the USA

Lay-vicar ST. BARNABAS PE CHURCH

SEPTEMBER 21, 1959